



WYOMING GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT

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December 24, 2008

Chris Boswell, Chief of Staff
Wyoming State Capitol
Cheyenne, WY 82002

sent via email

Dear Mr. Boswell,

In line with your request today, enclosed please find a suggested list of prioritized economic stimulus projects from Wyoming Game and Fish, prioritized by 2009 and 2010.

Sincerely,


Steve Ferrell
Director

SF/cmc

Enclosure

Wyoming Game and Fish Department
Economic Stimulus Projects

Projects for 2009

1. Boulder Hatchery Renovation Project
\$7,000,000

This project consists of supplying 3-phase power to the facility, complete collection and covering of the spring water supply, expanding the isolation (or quarantine) facility into two separate units with effluent treatment, replace the 60 year old concrete raceways with covered, modern units, build hatching and rearing facilities to eliminate potential of disease transmission from fish transferred to the station, update to code shop electrical system, repair foundation and stem wall to existing shop building and renovate exiting fish feed distribution center.

2. Comfort Stations (Restrooms)
\$800,000

This project consists of replacing or installing twenty (20) new comfort stations on many of our Wildlife Habitat Management Areas (WHMA) or Public Access Areas (PAA). The new comfort stations would be ADA handicapped accessible, have DEQ approved vaults, meet all applicable safety and health standards, be relatively vandal resistant and more appropriately address the needs of the public.

The proposed locations are listed below:

- South Park WHMA
- North Platte- South Pick Bridge PAA
- North Platte – North Lusby Parking Area PAA
- North Platte – Speck/Bessemer Bend PAA
- Viva Naughton Reservoir West PAA
- North Platte – Robertson Road PAA
- North Platte – South Douglas PAA (2 Stations)
- Bighorn River PAA (2 Stations)
- Wick WHMA (2 Stations)
- Bud Love WHMA
- Springer WHMA (2 Stations)
- Yellowtail WHMA (2 Stations)
- Ocean Lake WHMA (2 Stations)

3. Yellowtail Wildlife Habitat Management Area Irrigation Concrete Ditch Project
\$500,000

This project consists of installing 2,900 feet of concrete ditch and widening the access road to accommodate for ditch repairs, cleaning and providing safe access for maintenance. In addition, undershots would be installed to carry any flash flood water under and away from the ditch. The present ditch is subject to flash floods causing wash outs, damage and settling.

Wyoming Game and Fish Department
Economic Stimulus Projects

4. Wyoming Highway 789 (Baggs) Underpass

Estimated Cost \$1,000,000

Secured funding \$ 350,000

Requested Funding \$650,000

This is a cooperative project with the Wyoming Department of Transportation that will build an underpass near Baggs, Wyoming. This underpass will allow deer to cross Highway 789. deer are currently be killed as they cross this highway to and from seasonal migrations. The mortalities have increased significantly in recent years as a result of the gas development in the area and the number of workers using the highway to service this industry. Partners include BLM (WLCI), WGFD, WyDOT, LSRCD, and potentially Industry.

**5. Whiskey Mountain Conservation Camp Renovation/Expansion
\$3,500,000**

The Whiskey Mountain Conservation Camp is utilized by the Wyoming Game and Fish Department and other conservation organizations as a field station to educate and teach students and adults about conservation. The camp is used to educate a wide variety of audiences on conservation education, outdoor skills, wildlife and wildlife habitat. The facilities are in a great place, but are old and need to be updated for safety, health and environmental standards. The facilities are only useable during the summer months and with the proper upgrades, can become a year round education and training facility.

**6. Colorado River Cutthroat Trout Restoration at LaBarge Creek, Sublette
County, Wyoming**

Estimated Cost \$850,000

Secured funding \$550,000

Requested Funding \$300,000

The proposed project will construct a permanent fish migration barrier, capable of withstanding a 100-year flood on La Barge Creek in Southwestern Wyoming. The barrier will protect native Colorado River cutthroat trout within a recently restored, 58-mile section of the watershed. La Barge Creek in Southwestern Wyoming is a major tributary and supports the largest core population of the subspecies, without the restoration project protected by the permanent barrier the entire subspecies would most probably warrant listing under ESA.

Wyoming Game and Fish Department
Economic Stimulus Projects

7. Kendrick Dam Bypass Channel, Clear Creek, Sheridan County Wyoming

Estimated Cost \$725,000

Secured funding \$614,600

Requested Funding \$111,000

The project entails constructing a rock bypass channel around Kendrick Dam to allow fish endemic to lower Clear Creek and the Powder River to access middle Clear Creek. Kendrick Dam, which occurs about 7-miles upstream of the mouth of Clear Creek, precludes sauger, channel catfish, shovelnose sturgeon, goldeye, river carpsucker, plains minnow, sturgeon chub and western silvery minnow in the Powder River and lower Clear Creek from accessing middle Clear Creek. Passing the dam would open 36-miles of suitable stream habitats for many of these species in middle Clear Creek. Final design will be completed by April 2009.

8. Weed Management Projects

In recent years the encroachment of noxious weeds on the Wildlife Habitat Management Areas (WHMA) has been extensive. Hundreds of acres have become invested and these plants specifically limit water and native forage for upland birds and waterfowl. Funding is needed to reduce the amount and encroachment of the noxious weeds on the Rawhide, Yellowtail, Sand Mesa, Ocean Lake, Springer/Table Mountain, Spence/Moriarity, and Inberg/Roy WHMAs.

• Yellowtail WHMA	\$250,000
• Sand Mesa WHMA	\$250,000
• Ocean Lake WHMA	\$250,000
• Rawhide WHMA	\$100,000
• Springer/Table Mountain WHMA	\$100,000
• Spence/Moriarity WHMA	\$100,000
• Inberg/Roy WHMA	\$25,000

9. Fencing Projects

The fences on many of the Wildlife Habitat Management Areas (WHMA) are in need of major repairs or replacement. The majority of these fences are on crucial winter range and provide valuable forage. The forage provided on these areas also reduces the risk of damage to private property because of wintering big game.

• Spence/Moriarity WHMA (Replacement)	\$500,000
• Inberg/Roy WHMA (Replacement)	\$250,000
• Sunshine WHMA (Replacement)	\$200,000
• Wick WHMA (Replacement)	\$100,000
• Red Rim WHMA (Modification)	\$150,000

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10. Irrigation System Projects

Many of the Wildlife Habitat Management Areas (WHMA) are dependent upon water delivery systems for irrigation and wetlands. The water is used to irrigate and extend the forage available on crucial winter ranges, provide for fall and spring nutritional boost for big game and provide water for wetlands and permanent cover or food plots for upland birds and waterfowl. The majority of the water delivery systems are in need of repairs or upgrading. Many of these ditches are inefficient in transporting the water, prone to failure and costly to maintain. If the ditches on the Wick, Inberg/Roy, Spence/Moriarity and Yellowtail WHMAs were improved, it would result in less maintenance, better water delivery and increased forage production. This is even more important with the drought and reduced water available for irrigation.

• Wick WHMA	\$500,000
• Wiggins WHMA	\$1,000,000
• Yellowtail WHMA	\$1,000,000
• Inberg/Roy WHMA	\$225,000
• Sunlight WHMA	\$125,000

11. Fence Conversions in mule deer migration area

Estimated Cost \$200,000

Secured funding \$ 0

Request Funding \$200,000

There are at least dozens of miles of non-wildlife friendly range fences in the Baggs area that are in need of conversion. Most are woven sheep type fencing that is no longer needed, and some are multiple strand barbed wire that are not up to current standards. This is another project that could be done in multiple years until completion. The initial phase would start with 40 miles of fence adjacent to the Baggs Deer Crossing project, and the extending west to Powder Rim and east to Wild Horse Butte. All woven wired fences would be converted first, and then non-standard barbed wire fences.

12. Trumpeter Swan Green River Summer Habitat Project

Estimated Cost \$1,265,000

Secured funding \$ 715,000

Requested Funding \$550,000

Wyoming Game and Fish Department has been working with landowners in the Green River Basin to restore and create shallow water wetland habitat for an expanding population of Trumpeter Swan, a species of greatest conservation need in the state. Three projects were completed in 2008 and we are seeking funding for two additional projects. Landowners hire local engineering and construction companies to complete funded projects.

Wyoming Game and Fish Department
Economic Stimulus Projects

13. Gros Ventre Habitat Enhancement Projects

Estimated Cost - \$ 700,000

Secured Funding - \$100,000

Requested Funding - \$600,000

This is a cooperative project among the Bridger-Teton National Forest, US Fish and Wildlife Service (National Elk Refuge), Grand Teton National Park, and the Wyoming Game & Fish Dept. The goal is to enhance spring winter and fall habitat for wild ungulates through the use of prescribed fire and mechanical treatments. Bighorn sheep, elk and moose habitats are emphasized. The project is ongoing with initial treatments implemented during the fall of 2008. Approximately 5,000 acres have been treated in a mosaic pattern and an additional 35,000 acres are expected to be treated over the next 5-7 years. The project involves numerous personnel within the above agencies, promotes local economics and enhances important habitats within the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem.

14. Greys River Aspen Inventory and Treatments

Estimated Cost - \$ 200,000

Secured Funding - \$45,000

Requested Funding - \$155,000

This a cooperative project among the Bridger-Teton National Forest, Teton Science Schools, and Wyoming Game & Fish Dept. The goal is to map all existing aspen communities in the Greys River Ranger District and document their successional/ecological condition. Aspen provides important habitat for approximately 200 wildlife species and Wyoming has lost roughly 60% of its historic acreage as a result of fire suppression and natural succession. This is an ongoing project with approximately 50% of the inventory work completed in 2008. Funding would be used to complete the inventory and initiate treatments in targeted aspen communities.

15. Livestock Fence Removal Project

BTNF Federal Land Livestock Grazing Allotments

Estimated Cost - \$45,000.

Secured Funding - \$0.00

Requested Funding - \$45,000.

Abandoned wire fencing and wire exclosures formerly necessary to control livestock distribution on grazing allotments on federal lands poses a hazard to native big game animals during movement and migration between seasonal ranges. Animals become entangled in loose wires or trapped in exclosures that can result in injury eventually leading to death. Removal of the wire fence and exclosures from vacant grazing allotments or active allotments where the fence or exclosures are no longer a necessary livestock control measure eliminates this hazard across the landscape and enhances freedom of movement of native wildlife across seasonal ranges.

Wyoming Game and Fish Department
Economic Stimulus Projects

16. Statewide Facility and Housing Energy Audit Project
\$3,000,000

Contract energy audits on all Department Regional Offices and employee housing statewide. Develop efficiency plans and contract facility upgrades through local contractors.

17. Miracle Mile Spawning Gravel

Estimated Cost - \$50,000

Secured Funding - \$0

Requested Funding - \$50,000

Trout populations and angling success in the Miracle Mile section of the North Platte River (below Kortes Dam) are currently lower than past levels. The lack of spawning gravel is a possible limiting factor for Miracle Mile trout populations. Kortes Dam prevents gravel that is essential for successful trout spawning from entering the Miracle Mile from upstream sources. Placing spawning structures with spawning gravel into the Miracle Mile will likely increase trout recruitment and improve population numbers and angling success.

18. Grizzly Bear Meat Pole Installation Project

Gros Ventre Wilderness Area and BTNF backcountry/frontcountry dispersed recreation camp sites

Estimated Cost - \$60,000.

Secured Funding - \$0.00

Requested Funding - \$60,000.

As Greater Yellowstone Area grizzly bear numbers increase and the population expands its range southward the need for proper food storage facilities also increases to minimize the potential for food conditioned bears and possible bear-human conflicts. Proper storage of hunter harvested big game animals in backcountry areas is concern each fall as bears are attracted to hunter killed animals and potentially to hunting camps. Installation of metal and/or wood game meat poles helps to keep meat out of reach of bears in constant search of food during the fall period of high caloric food intake prior to hibernation. Having the option to hang meat and/or camp food from an installed pole encourages hunter compliance with current food storage regulations on federal lands and facilitates removal of food attractants from a bears reach. Improved sanitation in bear-prevalent areas around hunting camps decreases the likelihood of bears obtaining food rewards, which reduces the number of incidents of bear and human conflicts and the need for management actions to relocate or remove bears from the population.

Wyoming Game and Fish Department
Economic Stimulus Projects

19. South Labarge Common Allotment Spike Treatment

Estimated Cost = \$5,000

Secured Funding = \$0

Requested Funding = \$5,000

This proposal would treat approximately 200 acres of crucial winter range for Wyoming Range mule deer. This project will focus on a mixed mountain shrub community to improve stand health of antelope bitterbrush within an area increasingly dominated by mountain big sagebrush. The presence of cheatgrass in this area restricts our ability to use fire to achieve desired results. Improvements to these shrubs will enhance winter range for mule deer and may result in increased winter survival.